22 Jan. 1966

Dear Miss McAlinden:

Thanks very much for the Christmas card. I appreciated the greeting. Since I have not done so before, let me wish you a very successful new year. And may all our plant specimens be quite adequate with flowers, fruits, or cones.

The recent crop you sent does not get us off to a very happy start this year, but I'll tell you what I can about them. Presumably the Sebastopol specimens are cultivated so could have come from anywhere, which makes matters all the more difficult. Well here goes.

1 - This is surely a Chamaecyparis or false-cypress. It looks much like our native C. lawsoniana (A.Murr.) Parl., or Port-Orford-cedar or Lawson-cypress. If I had collected it myself from the north coastal coniferous forest, I would not hesitate to call it that. However, the leaves are little glandular on the back and fit better the Alaska-cedar, C. nootkatensis. What was the bark like, thick and ridged or with flat scaly ridges? The former bark fits C. lawsoniana and the latter C. nootkatensis. Of course, it could also be Eastern U. S., Japanese, etc. in cultivation.

No. 2 - is more difficult. It looks like juvenilistic Juniper or some other member of the Cupressaceae, what the nurserymen call"Retinospora". I wonder if there might not be more mature foliage or some cones in some other part of the tree. I need much more to go on here. There are no good general books for identification of conifers just the reginnal floras. Most of the better works are out of print. For cultivated conifers I would recommend A. Rehder's "Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs Hardy in North America" published by MacMillan. Bailey's"Manual of Cultivated Plants"also should be helpful.

No. 3 - is far too fragmentary to determine. Surely the writer could find a larger branch even if there are no flowers and fruits. Were it from S. Diego Co. I would call it Baccharis sarothroides, the broom baccharis, but that species is definitely not native in the S. Cruz area. My guess is that it belongs to the composites, Asteraceae, but I really need a much better specimen to determine it. Guess I am just a taxonomist not a miracle-worker.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Thorne.